

Eliane Cristina Deckmann Fleck (ed.), *As artes de curar em um manuscrito jesuítico inédito do Setecentos: o Paraguai Natural Ilustrado do padre José Sánchez Labrador (1771-1776)*, 01. ed. São Leopoldo, RS: Oikos Editora, 2015, 590 pp.

The handwritten manuscript format has been the most common instrument of disclosure and circulation of knowledge and information even after the invention of press. The «culture of the scribes» was faster and more economical,¹ which contributed to the circulation of manuscripts' dynamics during the 17th and 18th centuries. The members of the Society of Jesus who acted as missionaries in America were responsible for the production of knowledge about the New World. During their expeditions they worked in different instances and places and had contact with indigenous groups and nature. Millones-Figueroa and Ledezma stated that the Jesuits' intellectual work in and about America resulted in a number of different productions, such as cosmographic and astronomic treatises, dictionaries, natural histories, curiosities and compendia of Geography and Botany. These productions were important for people from inside as well as outside the Society of Jesus and were widely used.² Although some of the Jesuits' work is well researched and currently being studied by historians, there are also a number of unpublished handwritten manuscripts. Residing in archives these manuscripts are not readily accessible.

Regarding the importance of those manuscripts to be disclosed to the academic community, we highlight the contribution of Eliane Fleck's volume on publishing parts of the manuscript *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado*, written by the Jesuit José Sánchez Labrador between 1771 and 1776. This large handwritten source can only be found at the General Archive of the Society of Jesus (ARSI), in Rome, and was never fully published. According to Fleck, this may have been caused by any number of factors, including the manuscript's extension, the bureaucratic procedures of editorial censorship, the impression costs in the 18th century and the fact that when the manuscript was written the Socie-

1. Ferreira, Teresa Duarte & Ana Cristina Santana, «O tratamento documental de manuscritos ao serviço da investigação: a experiência da Biblioteca Nacional», Lisboa, May of 2006. Available in: <<http://purl.pt/6393/1/comunicacoes/manuscritos.pdf>>. Accessed: March 20th 2016.

2. Millones-Figueroa, Luis & Domingo Ledezma, «Introducción: los jesuitas y el conocimiento de la naturaleza americana». In Millones-Figueroa, Luis & Domingo Ledezma (eds.), *El saber de los jesuitas, historias naturales y el Nuevo Mundo*, Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2005, pp. 9-26.

ty of Jesus was not yet restored, which happened only in 1814. However, *As Artes de Curar em um manuscrito inédito do Setecentos* is not only important because it discloses rich parts of the manuscript, but also because it presents different possibilities of studying the source. Some of these have already been explored by the author and some others are yet to be investigated.

Paraguay Natural Ilustrado's author, José Sánchez Labrador can be considered an example of what Del Valle inferred when she said that Jesuits had an important role in «seeking information», because they were physically in America, this enabled them to live with indigenous groups and experience natural novelties that could be cataloged. According to this scholar, Jesuits occupied a «privileged position», having a structure at the service of science,³ which permitted them to produce works that were important for the dissemination of knowledge about America and other regions where they operated. Sánchez Labrador was born in La Guardia, city of La Mancha, on September 19th, 1714 or 1717. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1731 or 1732 and travelled to the *Rio de la Plata* region between 1733 and 1734. Sánchez Labrador studied Philosophy and Theology at the University of Córdoba, where he also acted as a professor. The author worked as a missionary in about fourteen villages or *reducciones*, and coexisted with indigenous Guaranis, Zamucos, Chiquitos, Guanás, Mbayás and Guaicurús groups. In 1767, he was informed about the expulsion decree of the Jesuits from Spain and its colonies and, in 1768, Sánchez Labrador arrived in Ravenna, Italy, where he spent 30 years in exile, dying on October 10th, 1798. While in exile, he wrote his main books, *Paraguay Católico*, published in 1910 and *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado*, still undated.

It is clear that Sánchez Labrador has not just had the «privilege» of coexisting with indigenous groups and observing the Jesuit Province of Paraguay's flora and fauna, but also had access to the Natural History bibliography at the University of Córdoba and at Ravenna, where he wrote the *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado*. Considering that other scholars who had also studied Sánchez Labrador's works (books, cartography, dictionaries), like Sainz Ollero et al,⁴ Furlong,⁵ Moreno⁶ and Barcelos,⁷ call attention to his erudition and his deep knowledge on Natural History, claiming that he was careful in flora, fauna, geology, geography and climate descriptions, while always using prestigious authors' works as references in his writings. This demonstrates the relevance of this source, so rich in

3. Valle, Ivonne del, *Escribiendo desde las márgenes: colonialismo y jesuitas en el siglo XVIII*, México, Siglo XVIII, 2009.

4. Sainz Ollero, Héctor, Helios Sainz Ollero, Francisco Suárez Cardona & Miguel Vázquez de Castro Otañón, *José Sánchez Labrador y los naturalistas jesuitas del Río de la Plata*, Madrid, Mopu, 1989.

5. Furlong, Guillermo, *Naturalistas Argentinos durante la dominación Hispánica*, Buenos Aires: Editorial Huapes, 1948 (Cultura Colonial Argentina, v. 8).

6. Moreno, Aníbal Ruiz, *La Medicina en "el Paraguay Natural" (1771-1776) del P. Jose Sánchez Labrador SJ.: Exposición comentada del texto original*, Tucuman, Universidad Nacional de Tucuman, 1948.

7. Barcelos, Arthur Henrique Franco, *O Mergulho no Seculum: exploração, conquista e organização espacial jesuítica na América espanhola colonial*, Tese de Doutorado, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul (PUCRS), Porto Alegre, 2006.

information and in characteristics, which can be explored by other scholars, who can have access of some parts of Sánchez Labrador's work.

The handwritten manuscript *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado* was originally written between 1771 and 1776 by Sánchez Labrador in Ravenna, Italy. The book was organized by the author in four parts, or volumes, and each of them is divided in «books», which have internal divisions in chapters. The first part is dated of 1771 and has three books: I. *Diversity of grounds and terrestrial bodies*; II. *Water and several things belonging to it*; and III. *Air, winds, seasons of the year, weather of these countries and the most common diseases*. The second part deals specifically with *Botany*, having the date of 1772 and seven books: I. *Botany or on the plants in general*; II. *Jungles, fields and prairies of Paraguay*; III. *On the trees in particular*. IV. *Palms, tunas and reeds*; V. *Vines and other vegetation*; VI. *Small trees, scrub and herbs*; and VII. *Some utilities and curiosities*. The third is dated of 1771 and is divided in three books: I. *Quadruped animals*; II. *Birds*; and III. *Fishes*. The fourth part of the manuscript, of 1776, has three books: I. *Amphibian animals*; II. *Reptile animals*; and III. *Insects*. The manuscript also includes a total of 127 handmade drawings of plants, animals and instruments, all of them by the author.

The first volume of *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado* has 558 pages; the second, 500; the third, 421; and the last part has 373 pages, which results that the full manuscript has circa of 1852 pages. Besides the books, each part of the manuscript owns a cover sheet, a summary and an introduction. These features are different from most part of the manuscripts that usually do not present a cover sheet and the author's name, date and local⁸ as specific as in Sánchez Labrador's work. However, the Argentinian Historian Moya, while analyzing Jesuit production of manuscripts at the University of Córdoba, stated that the Jesuits had a bibliographical need in their closed academic background, which boosted them on trying to produce their handwritten manuscripts as similar as possible to printed books and with an elitist language.⁹

Whereas is clear that the *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado* manuscript is a huge work and that the publication of the entire source in one book is impossible, it is essential to specify what can be found from the original manuscript in *As Artes de Curar em um manuscrito inédito do Setecentos*, and what were the criteria used by Fleck to embed her work. It is important to verify that the original Sánchez Labrador's manuscript was written in Spanish and that the transcribed parts in Fleck's work were not modified, translated or even adapted to the actual Spanish grammatical rules; the manuscript was transcribed exactly in the way that the author wrote. To compound this work, there were used parts of the second, third and fourth volumes. From the second volume, we can find: an image of the original cover sheet, the transcribed cover sheet, its Introduction, its Summary and

8. Ferreira, T. D. & Santana, A. C., *O tratamento...*, cit., 2016.

9. Moya, Silvano G. A. Benito, «Élites universitarias, jesuitas y cultura escrita. Córdoba del Tucumán durante el siglo XVIII», en Coello de la Rosa, Alexandre & Teodoro Hampe Martínez, *Escritura, imaginación política y la Compañía de Jesús en la América Latina [siglos XVI-XVIII]*, Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2011, pp. 213-245.

the sixth book called *Small trees, scrub and herbs*. The third volume is represented by: an image of the original cover sheet, the transcribed cover sheet, its Introduction, its Summary, a part of chapter six, *On Deers*, and the entire chapter seven, *On Bezoar Stones*, both of the chapters from the first book, *Quadruped animals*. From the fourth volume, the book presents: an image of the original cover sheet, the transcribed cover sheet, its Introduction, its Summary and the last chapter of the third book, *Insects*, called *Usefulness of some insects for medicine*.

Those parts that can be found at Fleck's work are preceded by an authorial explanatory introduction, where it is possible to find discussions with different authors who had already studied Sánchez Labrador's works, including *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado*. All these authors, including the ones cited above, just published few excerpts from the original manuscript, some of them without presenting the references' parts from which the citations were thrown. The Introduction includes some theoretical discussions about the source and presents bibliography to dissert about Sánchez Labrador's trajectory, *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado*'s features, and handwritten manuscripts' features, History of the Society of Jesus, production of science by Jesuits and medicinal practices of the 18th century. The author also exposes explanations on each of the three parts of the manuscript published in the book, showing what was selected to be part of the final work. This Introduction also has some images from Sánchez Labrador's handmade drawings, which can be found in the original manuscript, to illustrate some of the plants, quadruped animals and insects about which he wrote in the transcribed parts in Fleck's book.

Eliane Fleck's research work with *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado* is more focused on the History of Medicine, evidencing the therapeutic practices observed and described by Sánchez Labrador, especially indigenous', and highlighting the indications of plants' and animals' use in healing. Therefore, the author selected some parts of the manuscript that she had already studied and that present examples of how the Jesuit interpreted and wrote about the therapeutic virtues of the Jesuit Province of Paraguay's nature. The sixth book from the second volume of *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado*, on Botany, is where the reader can find a lot of scrubs and herbs that were used for healing, like *tobacco*, *The* and *Payco*. The part of the selected third volume is the one where Sánchez Labrador specifically wrote about the *Bezoar Stone*, presenting all of its medicinal virtues and claiming scientific explanations for its efficiency and formation, rejecting its mystical side. Finally, the chapter from the fourth volume included in the book is about some insects' medicinal uses, where the reader can understand how Sánchez Labrador perceive these animals and stated their importance for healing some diseases.

In all those transcribed parts and presented in *As Artes de Curar em um manuscrito inédito do Setecentos*, it is possible to find explanatory footnotes, marked with the «editor's note» [N. Ed.], where Fleck explained and disserted about some words or names used by Sánchez Labrador. Some plants described by the Jesuit received explanations, translated names, exposition on its properties and therapeutic virtues, and even some information discovered in other Jesuits' works, like Father Pedro Montenegro's *Materia Medica Misionera*. Fleck also elucidated some terms and different words emplo-

yed by Sánchez Labrador, defining important medicinal concepts of the period, while she also disserted about some of the cited authors in the text and explained a few manuscript's characteristics.

In conclusion, Fleck's work is an essential publication of a Jesuit's handwritten manuscript that hardly could be accessed by other Historians without this initiative. The disclosure of parts of an important and rich source like *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado* is a ponderous work which requires time and research from the scholar who engages in this effort. However, it also results in a significant contribution for future research using this same source. The content presented in Fleck's volume from the Jesuit Sánchez Labrador's manuscript is full of information that can be used to study therapeutic procedures of the 18th century, healing practices used by indigenous groups, medicine conceptions of this period of History of Science, Natural History, Jesuits' science productions, circulation of information among the Society of Jesus members, Jesuit writing and the Jesuit Province of Paraguay. Besides this content, Fleck's Introduction and notes are substantial and demonstrate all the work employed in the analysis of José Sánchez Labrador's *Paraguay Natural Ilustrado*.

Mariana Alliatti Joaquim
Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos